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HEADQUARTERS
UNITED STATES EUROPEAN COMMAND
Office of the Deputy Commander in Chief

APO 128, US Army

2. APR. 1954

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

1. In my opening remarks at the first conference of the Commanders in Chief at which I presided today, I stated that I was proud of the distinction of being a member of such a fine organization. My predecessor, General Handy, was a man of long experience in this command; all of the Commanders in Chief had completely supported him and I was confident of equal support from them in the future. I am not completely unfamiliar with the background of this command having participated in the early deliberations in the Pentagon prior to its organization. There are those who did not and do not believe that the command serves a useful purpose. I am one of those who believe that the command is essential.

2. It is my belief that Service integrity should be preserved insofar as possible and that this headquarters should step in only in those cases where coordination among the services is required, where duplication and overlapping is likely to occur or has occurred, or when requested by higher authority.

3. In the position now occupied by me, it is my purpose to be completely objective and to call the shots as I see them regardless of service significance. This headquarters is working for all three services and not for any one service.

4. It is my request that component commands maintain flexibility and not rigidity in their plans and viewpoints. They should not blindly follow a course of action that good sense and experience tell us is wrong. The course should be changed, or action should be taken to permit a change of course, when it becomes evident that a change should be made.

5. This headquarters is here to help, not to hinder. It will be appreciated if, when a commander considers this headquarters to be a hindrance, he will make his views known to me personally at once. I prefer to handle these matters on a person-to-person basis and not by letter or by memorandum.

6. When a bad situation is discovered in a command, it is my belief that it is best to make it known to those who may eventually question it before the matter has grown into a conflagration; in other words make it known when it begins to bulge and don't wait for it to bust.

#2

7. I am here as a member of a splendid team that plays according to the rules and I am available to any commander at any hour of the day or night when and if the occasion warrants.

ORVAL R. COOK
General USAF
Deputy Commander in Chief

HEADQUARTERS
UNITED STATES EUROPEAN COMMAND
Office of the Deputy Commander in Chief

APO 128, US Army
1 April 1954

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

1. By way of greeting I informed the assembled staff of the honor and pleasure I felt at joining such a fine team. I repeated that I have heard General Handy tell them they were members of one of the best staffs that he had ever had, and that in private General Handy had reiterated the same thing to me. My belief is that this staff is unique among staffs today because it is composed of experienced officers of long service who know or who should know all the rules.

2. No immediate changes in people or organization beyond those already scheduled are contempleted. I will not willingly be a party to arbitrary and radical changes ever, and will do my upmost to soften those that are forced upon us. My belief is that this type of change generally disrupts an organization and causes loss in efficiency and effectiveness, and should be avoided if possible.

3. One of the hallmarks of a good staff is its ability to anticipate. It has been my observation that the great preponderance of troubles and problems generally is of our own making and results from failure to anticipate when it is possible to do so, by failure to act at all, or by failure to act in time. A pretty good rule to observe is to get at a problem when it starts to bulge; don't wait for it to bust.

4. Another rule which I like to observe is that whenever we are in the wrong, admit it promptly and get busy with corrective measures designed not only to fix the immediate trouble but to take care of like problems in the future.

5. The staff probably will be reminded by me of the necessity for strict adherence to security rules and procedures at least once a month. It is my belief that we must exercise the upmost care and protection of classified information, and when and if the Chief of Staff has occasion to bring to my attention violations of security, treatment of those responsible will not be lenient.

6. Some personal notes: I am not running for office. It is my intent to be objective and call the shots as I see them without bias or favor for or against any service. I have no desire for personal glory and favor the minimum of ceremony and publicity. When ceremony and publicity is essential to the mission or to keep the public

#1

adequately informed of what we are doing, I will insist that it be done correctly. My personal inclination generally is to be very patient but that patience can be strained. When staff studies or other matters are presented to me for discussion or decision, I will be very impatient with incomplete sets of facts (that is:not all the facts known at the time) or with sets of facts that are obviously slanted. I don't like "yes men".

7. I have no personal feelings about constructive criticisms and suggestions for improvement; those always will be welcomed.

8. My door always will be open to the Commanders and to the members of the Headquarters Staff whenever they wish to see me. I emphasize, however, that the Chief of Staff will run the staff. I am available at any hour day or night on any day if a matter is sufficiently important.

ORVAL R. COOK
General USAF
Deputy Commander in Chief

(Reviewed by General Cook on 1 April 1954 - File in Memo for Record)

RJP